

**Perkins III**  
**Postsecondary Performance**

***Best Practices!!***

**Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Division of Vocational and Adult Education  
P.O. Box 480  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102**

## Postsecondary Academic Attainment

Waynesville Technical Academy has a postsecondary admissions policy and procedure in place, which helps ensure the academic performance of our postsecondary students for the Perkins accountability reporting requirements. All postsecondary applicants are required to complete the COPS Interest Inventory prior to acceptance into a training program. The admissions criteria for acceptance into our postsecondary programs consists of the following:

- ✓ Proof of high school diploma or GED
- ✓ Mean scores on Test of Adult Basic Education (T.A.B.E.)
  - 7.1 grade equivalent in Reading, Mathematics and Language Arts
- ✓ Minimum scores required for specific program areas of the Bennett Mechanical Comprehension Aptitude Test
  - 75 – Automotive Technology
  - 50 – Welding, Collision Repair, Electronics, Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning, and Construction Technology
- ✓ Names and addresses of three school or work references
- ✓ PSB (Nursing Program – test administered by the LPN Program)

Postsecondary Perkins funds were used to purchase computers to assist students in remediation activities, enhance learning and increase their academic as well as technical knowledge. The computers are networked with Internet capability so that students can exercise their academic skills in research and report writing, which ultimately leads to improvement in the Perkins academic attainment performance requirement.

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The *First Alert* project provides vocational students with an avenue for obtaining additional help outside of the classroom, in order to achieve success in the core academic subjects. This referral, remediation, and follow-up program works closely with the instructors of students in vocational courses, the Disabled Student Services Coordinator and the New Traditions personnel. This one-on-one contact gives students with special barriers a chance to progress and eventually succeed. By closely monitoring students while enrolled in a vocational program, early intervention presents failure and assures that learning in core academic areas is achieved.

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Lake Career and Technical Center has integrated academics into its vocational-technical curriculum. We utilize the T.A.B.E. as a tool to measure postsecondary academic attainment, which has proven to be a good tool.

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All postsecondary students are pre-tested using the T.A.B.E. prior to acceptance in a postsecondary program.

All postsecondary students are screened and scored by:

- ✓ Completeness of application
- ✓ Prior School G.P.A.
- ✓ Transcript
- ✓ Attendance Records
- ✓ Interview Score
- ✓ References

All students may attend summer brush-up (2-weeks) at no cost.

All postsecondary students attend the *Skills Center* one day a week during the school year to integrate Mathematics and Communication Arts into their vocational training.

Postsecondary student receive quarterly progress reports.

Postsecondary student participate in internships.

All students are administered a post-test of the T.A.B.E.

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Rolla Public Schools (Allied Health Programs) has encourage professional development that directly impacts student academic attainment by spending the last 2 years in researching and implementing a Problems Based Learning environment through professional development teams.

Curriculum has been aligned with state and national program standards to insure that students will have success when sitting for board and certification examinations.

Rolla has utilized computerized testing environments to enhance and track academic attainment throughout various programs.

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The majority of our postsecondary students are enrolled in Business Technology. Students review mathematic skills when learning to operate a ten-key calculator as part of their curriculum. They review addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and conversion of fractions, percentages, and more. They apply the operations to payroll, invoices, and other record keeping activities.

The students also review grammar and punctuation when completing a unit in proofreading and editing. They also write business letters and make an oral presentation using presentation software.

The students receive individualized instruction due to a small class size. Tutoring is also available before and after class time.

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## Postsecondary Skill Attainment

The consortium has implemented a system to identify the competencies taught in their vocational programs and evaluate, track and report students' performance on those competencies. The system interfaces student information with the course and competency databases. Using this collection of shared databases, users will be able to easily record each student's performance or mastery of each competency. East Central College continues to provide the quality of a comprehensive system of competency management and reporting. A competency based management system operator may be contracted to provide the necessary training, management and reporting. Additional databases (i.e. test questions, test scores, reference materials) may also be linked to courses and competency databases.

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A combination of written and performance tests are used to ascertain the extent to which each student has achieved mastery of the essential occupational and employability skills required to complete his or her educational program. The written tests will measure the student's knowledge of the occupational field that they are preparing for. Typically written tests that will be used include: NOCTI (National Occupational Competency Testing Institute) tests, for those programs where these tests have been prepared: ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) equivalent examinations, for Automotive Technology and Automotive Collision Repair students; and the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) Airframe and Power Plant Mechanic Licensing Examination, for Aviation Maintenance students. An assessment grid that lists the test that is used for each educational program at Linn State Technical College (LSTC) where an appropriate test has been selected. LSTC continues to seek an appropriate test instrument where no instrument has been located.

All of LSTC's technical education programs will be competency based. As students progress through their programs, they are required to demonstrate mastery of the essential occupational and employability skills listed for the programs that they are completing. Performance tests will be used to check each skill ascertained to be essential for the occupation that which the student is preparing.

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Mineral Area College (MAC) has established a list of occupational and employability skills (competencies) for each of the associate degree programs. These skills were identified through the use of previously existing lists, such as the Missouri Vocational Education Competency Profiles, National Business/Industry Skill Standards, or through a DACUM process with the program advisory committee and validated the skill list by the program advisory committee for use to guide the development of the curriculum for each of the sequenced courses that lead to an associate degree in programs relating to vocational-technical education. In addition, the program advisory committee added skills relating to *all aspects of the industry* and then identified the skills from the validated listing that would be considered essential for a practitioner in the respective business/industry. Further, the faculty, during the curriculum development process, identified the respective skills from the original listing that were initially taught, subsequently reinforced, and assessed for mastery within each course for each associate degree program. The faculty records the perspective mastery of each skill and reports the mastery of identified essential skills to the Dean's Office each semester. These reports are summarized and analyzed and reported to DESE, annually. MAC annually compares the data from the summarized reports against the established high achievement standard and, if necessary, the established improvement standard to determine if performance improvement action should be planned and implemented. In addition, MAC reports the results of the essential skills mastery determination in compliance with DESE's accountability reporting requirements.

MAC conducts the following activities:

- ✓ Reviews and revises existing skill listings with program advisory committee input on a three-year rotation basis;
- ✓ Establishes new skill listings for new associate degree programs with program advisory committee input;
- ✓ Conducts the performance mastery assessment and report results;
- ✓ Analyzes and summarizes mastery reports;
- ✓ Identifies and implements additional disaggregated data reports;
- ✓ Compares result data to established performance standard(s);
- ✓ Determines improvement action, if necessary; and
- ✓ Reports data to DESE.

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A computerized student management software program is utilized to report student mastery to DESE at the end of each fiscal year. Each instructor, along with their advisory committee, will establish and review annually the list of essential occupational and employability skills for each year of the training program. The instructors will monitor these skills throughout the year and provide the necessary data for the computerized student management program. DESE will receive a report indicating, for all vocational programs operated by the district, the number of essential occupational skills mastered by the total number of post secondary vocational education students enrolled. The data is disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, and special populations as defined. The data also reflects the mastery of essential skills by post secondary students completing vocational programs and those students identified as concentrating in vocational education.

Activities include support for instructor externships, Career and Technical Student Organization's, job shadowing, advisory committees, professional development, and purchase of equipment. Instructors receive in-service training on the computerized competency tracking system. They stay abreast in using state-of-the-art technology and equipment. Training will be provided through various workshops, conferences, and vendor specific training. Postsecondary students know in advance the essential skills they will be expected to master. Instructors and support staff work with students to achieve mastery of these skills. Students who qualify are presented a Passport Portfolio at the end of the training program, which includes: a letter of recommendation from both the director and instructor, certificate of completion, resume, competency achievement report and work samples. An all-school advisory committee dinner meeting is conducted on at least an annual basis. The committees reviews the essential skills and list recommendations. Rosters and minutes of meetings are kept on file. Close relations are established and maintained with referral agencies to ensure student success. Monthly academic and attendance progress reports are provided to all referring agencies for every post secondary student sponsored. A post secondary counselor is available to assist students with problems both personal and academic. Students have the opportunity to participate in job shadowing activities, internships, and field trips in order to become familiar with and obtain an experience in understanding all aspects of an industry. Many of these opportunities will be in high tech fields. All postsecondary students are encouraged to join and participate in vocational student organizations in order to improve soft skills as well as technical skills.

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## Postsecondary Completion

There are two known factors that contribute to our good postsecondary completion rate. One is the attendance policy that is strictly adhered to and involves counseling to the students by numerous individuals. These include the vocational counselor, financial aid officer, instructors, and adult education coordinator. The other factor is our refund policy, which penalizes students who drop a course after a certain period of time.

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Beginning in 1996 East Central College piloted a retention project geared at reducing attrition of students in their first semester. We found that students with low placement test scores were most likely to drop out in their first semester.

Students testing in remedial classes were placed into a cohort and jointly enrolled in a block schedule. This meant that they all took all of their courses together. Each cohort was assigned a faculty mentor who met with him or her weekly. These cohorts received additional tutoring and participated in-group activities such as career exploration, library skills, journal keeping, computer usage, etc. Several out of the class contact points were also established. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the students participated in a cohort group enrolled for the next semester, compared to 68% in a control group.

Based upon the success of the project, the college has now incorporated the key elements of this project into an over all student orientation program for all Freshman, including 1 and 2 year certificate and AAS degree seekers.

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Data is provided to DESE for all postsecondary vocational students that complete a GED and/or post secondary certificate, degree or other credential. Through the existing computerized student management software student completion status is recorded as well as other credentials such as certifications that are earned by each student.

Student recognition and incentive activities include: quarterly, semester and annual recognition for improvement, superior achievement and perfect attendance. The Adult Basic Education program is available for students struggling academically. The postsecondary guidance counselor is also available to counsel students with academic and personal problems. A Student Assistance Team meets regarding anonymous referrals received on specific postsecondary students who are in need of assistance. Students receive progress reports every eight weeks to keep them informed of their progress. Close relations are established and maintained with referral agencies to ensure student success. Monthly academic and attendance progress reports are provided to all referring agencies for every postsecondary student sponsored. The agency sponsored postsecondary students will also receive a copy of the monthly progress report. Postsecondary students have the opportunity to participate in internships and field trips in order to become familiar with and obtain an experience in understanding all aspects of an industry. Many of these opportunities will be in high demand and high tech fields. All students are encouraged to join and be an active participant in vocational student organizations. Active participation in Career and Technical Student Organization's will increase the postsecondary students likelihood of completing their vocational program.

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The *First Alert* project provides vocational students with an avenue for obtaining additional help outside of the classroom, in order to achieve success in the core academic subjects. This referral, remediation, and follow-up program works closely with the instructors of students in vocational courses, the Disabled Student Services Coordinator and the New Traditions personnel. This one-on-one contact gives students with special barriers a chance to progress and eventually succeed. By closely monitoring students while enrolled in a vocational program, early intervention presents failure and assures that learning in core academic areas is achieved.

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The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, Director of Research, Director of Computer Services, Computer Programmers, and Administrative Associates have developed and will maintain a program to capture the graduation rate of students enrolled in AAS and certificate programs from the institutional database.

Ozarks Technical Community College's (OTC) Academic Affairs Division has developed a Program Review and Planning Process that is designed to serve the following purposes:

- ✓ Improve learning
- ✓ Improve teaching
- ✓ Promote assessment of student learning
- ✓ Critique and enhance curriculum design and revision
- ✓ Validate the need for the program and services
- ✓ Validate the quality of the program and services
- ✓ Assist in the cost and benefit analysis

OTC's Program Review and Planning Process is on file in the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs office.

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## Postsecondary Placement and Retention

Lake Career and Technical Center utilizes the following techniques to assist in meeting the postsecondary placement accountability requirement:

- ✓ Job shadowing in the area of the student's training
- ✓ Work closely with business partners through advisory committees
- ✓ Standardized pre-employment competencies and curriculum
- ✓ Students receive industry standard training (ex. Volvo Penta, MOUS, Cisco)
- ✓ Instructors and placement faculty who care about the students and their success
- ✓ Reputation of the training facility

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All of our postsecondary students were enrolled in high demand fields in our area: Practical Nursing, Computer Networking, and Welding. Enrolling postsecondary students in high demand training programs makes placing students in employment virtually effortless on the institutions part. Job placement service is available to assist students in securing employment after successful completion of their training programs, as well as part-time jobs for those desiring work while in school. Experience has shown that students who apply themselves during their technical training period have been very successful in securing work related to their training. The school contacts employers and makes every effort to place the graduates.

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The health related programs offered at the Rolla Technical Center have a very strong clinical component in which students rotate through several medical facilities. These clinical experiences often lead to direct placement of students.

An Allied Health Career Fair is held in May in which approximately 30 health care providers set up tables in the commons area of the building to recruit students from various health programs.

A structured recruitment and admissions policy insure a quality student, which results in a better and more employable graduate.

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One technique used by Lebanon Career and Technology Center to place postsecondary students is the student internship program. Students are placed on an internship with a business or particular industry while still enrolled in their training program. This gives the employer an opportunity to view the student's performance before going through the expense of actually hiring them. Often times the employer will hire the individual upon completion of their training as well as the internship.

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All of our postsecondary students are expected to participate in internship training activities. They must maintain ninety-five percent (95%) attendance, at least a B average, a positive work-related attitude, and attend a two-day internship training class.

Students are asked preferences of locations to drive to and types of businesses preferred. The instructor selects and contacts the employer(s) to arrange the internship. The student then contacts the employer to arrange a practice interview prior to the start of the internship. The cooperating employer and instructor through the use of weekly progress reports, evaluations, and an on-site visit monitor student progress at the end of the eight-week period.

The set-up conference that the instructor has with the employer emphasizes communication between the employer and the school. It is stressed that the internship serves as a learning experience for the student and that the instructor needs input from the employer on areas that the student needs to improve upon.

The internship training class covers the following topics: appropriate work behavior; working with a friend; working with people you don't like; handling anger, conflict and assertiveness; honoring the chain of command; sexual harassment; attendance and tardiness; and honesty.

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Rolla Technical Institute maintains an up-to-date database of students with the most current addresses and telephone numbers to assist in locating students after graduation. All students are asked to complete a follow-up contact form towards the end of the school year to capture changes contact information. RTI strives to record accurate graduation data in a timely manner and maintains end of course student resumes on disk.

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Rolla Technical Institute employs of a full-time Placement Coordinator who delivers a full-range of employment assistance to our graduates for their lifetime. Pre-employment curriculum is provided to postsecondary students including: resume and portfolio development, interviewing skill instruction, appropriate dress, job retention skills, and presentations by community business leaders concerning the requirements of entry level employee.

An extremely active recruitment and marketing program is in place as well. Better quality students are attracted through yearlong recruitment activities. Our marketing efforts attract the attention of potential employers who then look to RTI when they need to hire employees.

RTI also offers a wide variety of support services available to our students to enable them to be successful students who complete and are therefore placed and successful on the job. Every vocational school employee is responsible for placement of students. It is a team effort. Teachers, counselors, secretarial, and administrators are expected to participate in the successful placement of our graduates.

Our primary mission is to provide high quality entry-level employees and to produce the graduate who can excel in today's workforce.

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## Postsecondary Nontraditional Participation and Completion

For many years East Central College has conducted a *Returning Learners Workshop* conducted by the Coordinator for Nontraditional Programs. During this workshop participants are given a chance to plan, explore, change, succeed, and grow. Since many of the participants for this workshop are referred by our Missouri Career Center (formerly One-Stop) partner agency, many of the students enroll in 1 or 2-year certificate and AAS degree programs. Because of the positive reinforcement they have received many feel comfortable choosing high wage, nontraditional occupations.

Over the years that the college has conducted the *Returning Learners Workshop* over 800 students have participated. Many students comment that the workshop gives them the confidence to feel comfortable in their career goals, even if they have been out of school for a while.

The East Central College Foundation underwrites the tuition cost for students to attend the workshop making it free to the student.

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Career awareness activities begin at kindergarten and continue through postsecondary education. Information on nontraditional career opportunities is provided to students and their parents. Presentations occur in elementary schools as well as middle, junior and high schools within the district. The New Traditions Resource Center is utilized to assist with the promotion of nontraditional career opportunities. Projects ENTER and SERVE as well as the Regional Professional Development Committee provides in-service to instructors on techniques to assist nontraditional students. Two Vocational Resource Educators are utilized to assist with adaptation necessary for success in nontraditional programs. Tuition stipends are available for nontraditional students.

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The consortium has been assisting both secondary and postsecondary institutions to implement the gender equity provisions of the Perkins Act. Their expertise in the areas of career exploration and guidance, job readiness skills, job retention skills and the promotion of nontraditional occupations has helped many students achieve success. The consortium promotes training for nontraditional participation by the following:

- ✓ Awareness activities begin at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and continue through high school.
- ✓ Emphasis is placed on the fact that all careers are open to everyone regardless of gender.
- ✓ Group sessions are held for parents and information for individual parents emphasize how they can encourage their children to seek careers that match the student interests and aptitudes rather than their gender.
- ✓ Students who enroll in nontraditional programs and graduate serve as role models.
- ✓ Nontraditional completers are featured in success stories, publicity, and as workshop presenters.
- ✓ Resources from the Missouri Resource Center, Projects SERVE and ENTER are used to promote nontraditional employment.
- ✓ Professional development activities are made available to all high schools, area vocational-technical schools, and community colleges on ways they can promote nontraditional careers to their students.
- ✓ Support services are provided to all students enrolled in nontraditional programs during their training and during the transition period from school to work.
- ✓ These services are utilized and include job seeking skills and support.

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Awareness activities will begin with students at grade 7 and continue through high school. Some such activities are: SCCCC will in cooperation with the St. Charles County School-To-Work Consortium sponsor a Career Exploration Camp for middle school students looking at careers in the pathways of industrial and engineering technology, natural resources/agriculture, and health services. SCCCC sponsors a School-To-Work program for students between 16 and 21 who intend to pursue an Associate Degree in the field of health care. Emphasis in all such activities is that all careers are open to everyone regardless of gender. Information is also provided to parents as to how they can encourage their children to seek careers to match their interests and aptitudes rather than their gender.

Students who are currently enrolled in nontraditional training programs, and past graduates of these programs serve as role models and are featured in success stories, publicity and as workshop presenters. Persons working in nontraditional career fields are also utilized as mentors. Nontraditional students are provided the same supportive services during their training and the transition from school to work that are available to all vocational students.

Nontraditional students compete in the annual statewide Breaking Traditions contest and are recognized for their school success.

The New Traditions staff provides teachers, guidance personnel, and administrators with training in techniques for increasing awareness of opportunities in nontraditional training and employment.

SCCCC has participated in the Counseling for High Skills (CHS) project. Current career program students were surveyed concerning their perceptions of their preparation for their current training program. Of 34 students who expressed their judgment, 30 (88.2%) felt there was adequate or strong support at SCCCC for students participating in nontraditional training program.

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Our instructors encourage nontraditional students to reach their goal of course completion. In the past, nontraditional students have been recognized in the local newspaper and through Project Earth. Our placement staff works with nontraditional students to find jobs after completion of their training program.

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